

Black Film Festival



Logo design by Portfolio Associates, Philadelphia

Newark 1977

Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m.

June 22 & 29; July 6, 13, 20 & 27

Admission Free

Van Houten Library Theatre at
New Jersey Institute of Technology, 99 Summit St., Newark

Co-sponsors:

The Newark Museum • The Newark Public Library • N.J. Institute of Technology • Newark College-Rutgers University

JUNE 22 BLACK FILMMAKERS
Introduction: Dr. Clement Price, Rutgers University
Black Shadows on a Silver Screen
60 min./color/1975. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
Ossie Davis narrates this film in which prominent actors recount their experiences as actors in what were known as race movies: films produced by Blacks for Blacks between 1915 and 1950. These films were shown almost exclusively in the segregated theatres of the South and in primarily Black districts of the North such as Harlem.
Passing Through
105 min./color/1977. Larry Clark.
An eloquent statement about Black music, Warlock, a promising young musician struggling to relate his musical efforts to his cultural heritage, turns to an old Black musician, "Poppa Harris," for direction. The ensuing relationship results in Harris' imparting to young Warlock a sense of the eloquence and power of Black music. The role of Poppa Harris, the outlaws-beatnik, is played by 67-year-old veteran actor and composer Clarence Muse.

JUNE 29 PAUL ROBESON
Introduction: James Brown, Newark Public Library
The Tallest Tree in the Forest: Paul Robeson
84 min./b&w & color/1976. Phoenix Films.
A documentary examination of the life of Paul Robeson, distinguished Black artist and social critic. Portrays him as the child of a runaway slave, as a Rutgers undergraduate with an outstanding academic and athletic record, as a singer and actor of international renown, and as an articulate critic of American racism.
The Emperor Jones
72 min./b&w/1933. Budget Films.
A film classic. Paul Robeson powerfully portrays Brutus Jones, a Black Pullman porter who becomes emperor of Isthmian in this film adaptation of Eugene O'Neill's play. Production was initiated by Afro-Americans in opposition to Hollywood-produced films of the period which were ridden with demeaning stereotypes.

JULY 6 BLACK MUSIC
Introduction: Dan Morgenstern, Executive Director, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University
Rhythm and Blues Revue
70 min./1966. Kit Parker Films.
A vivacious variety musical film set on stage in a Harlem theatre and produced for all-Black audiences. Performers include Lionel Hampton, Count Basie, Cab Calloway, Nat King Cole, and Sarah Vaughn.
The Blues Accordin' to Lightnin' Hopkins
31 min./color/1970. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
An informal portrait of the Blues singer Lightnin' Hopkins in which the camera focuses not only on Hopkins but also on the rural Texas countryside in which he works. The film is improvisational in style, without formal narration; and, therefore, it reflects the free, improvisational character of Hopkins' music.
Got to Tell It: a Tribute to Mahalia Jackson
34 min./color/1974. Essex-Hudson Film Center, Phoenix Films.
A colorful account of the life of the great gospel singer, Mahalia Jackson, who spread the religious music of Afro-Americans to vast audiences throughout the world. The film poignantly depicts her early life in New Orleans, her years of struggle, and her rise to international fame. Commentary by Studs Terkel.

JULY 13 BLACK LEADERS, BLACK IDEAS
Introduction: Mrs. Milton Buck
Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.: An Autobiographical Documentary
58 min./color & b&w/1976. Phoenix Films.
Malcolm X Speaks
44 min./b&w/1972. Evergreen Films.
A documentary account of the life and thought of Malcolm X, the film portrays his life, beginning with his early days as a street hustler, and moves on to depict his prison term, his conversion to Islam, and his subsequent role as social and political leader of millions of Black Americans.
Legacy of a Dream
20 min./b&w & color/1974. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
A compilation of newsreel and videotape footage projects a moving sketch of Martin Luther King's career with statements by Coretta King and Andrew Young.

JULY 20 BLACK WRITERS
Introduction: To be announced
Paul Laurence Dunbar: America's First Black Poet
23 min./color/1972. Budget Films.
Dunbar was the first Black poet to "feel the Negro life aesthetically and express it lyrically." The film highlights Dunbar's best-known poems, concluding dramatically with a reading of Dunbar's short story, "The Lynching of Jube Benson."
Lorraine Hansberry: The Black Experience
26 min./color/1975. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
The life and writings of Lorraine Hansberry, civil rights activist and playwright, are examined memorably in this film, childhood on Chicago's South Side, student days at the University of Wisconsin, editor of Paul Robeson's newspaper, *Freedom*, and finally as an energetic, struggling writer.
My Childhood: James Baldwin
26 min./b&w/1967. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
The second part of a 2-part film which contrasts the childhood experience of Baldwin and Hubert Humphrey. Baldwin describes his childhood as characterized by poverty and despair intensified by racial hostility, but he concludes that his experiences, although nearly intolerable, may have spurred him into creativity.

JULY 27 BLACK REFLECTIONS
Introduction: Dr. Clement Price
A Man Named Charlie Smith
26 min./b&w/1965. Syracuse University.
In an absorbing personal narrative of slavery in America, Charlie Smith, age 120, tells of his capture in Liberia at the age of 12 and of his experiences in America before and after the Civil War.
Old, Black, and Alive
28 min./color/1974. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
A documentary on the lives of elderly Blacks living in Macon County, Alabama. Interviews with persons between the ages of 65 and 89 reveal much about their feelings and the ways in which they cope with life.
Yonder Come Day
26 min./color/1976. Essex-Hudson Film Center.
72-year-old Black folk singer Bessie Jones demonstrates songs, games and music that originated among the slaves in the ante-bellum South and have survived to the present day. She teaches neighborhood children at her home in Georgia and students at Yale.
I'm the Prettiest Piece in Greece
28 min./b&w/1975. Syracuse University.
Singer Billie Holiday, age 70, looks back on her life and punctuates her reminiscences with songs including "I'm the Prettiest Piece in Greece." Won the 1975 gold medal at Atlanta.